Emergency Nurses’ Perception of Incivility in the Workplace

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Objectives

- Describe the perceptions of workplace incivility by RN’s working in emergency departments.

- Discuss the correlation between uncivil behavior experienced as a nursing student and reporting of uncivil behavior in the workplace.
Background

- Incivility is defined as the lack of respect for others and typically involves rude or inconsiderate behavior to others.

- Examples: condescending or belittling remarks, gossiping, criticism in public, disregarding or ignoring, attacking integrity, raising the voice, rolling eyes or raising eyebrows, or name calling.\textsuperscript{1,2}
Background

- Bullying is typically repetitive in nature and recurs at least once a week and continues over an extended period of time to the same individual.
- Examples: hostility, verbal attacks, refusal to assist co-worker, complaining about the targeted co-worker to administrators, discussing the co-worker negatively verbally or in writing to others \(^2, 3, 4, 5\)
Horizontal/lateral violence is defined as discourteous interactions between nurses who work at comparable organizational levels and commonly characterized as divisive, backbiting, and infighting.

Examples: complaining about others, sarcastic and humiliating comments about others, ignoring or intentionally disregarding other’s opinions or input, and insulting or belittling others in public.
Background

- Uncivil behavior can cause nurses to experience post-traumatic stress disorder and symptoms such as low self-esteem, anxiety, sleep disturbance, recurrent nightmares, and depression.
Prevalence of incivility: more than 85% of nurses reported that they were victims of horizontal violence 8

Almost 85% of the 553 nurses surveyed reported workplace incivility in the past year 9

Further research has revealed that 39% of new nurses in their first year of practice witnessed bullying 10
Background

- 60% of new nurses leave their first position due to the presence of incivility in the workplace \(^{11}\)
- 10% leave the profession due to the presence of incivility in the workplace \(^{11}\)
- The cost associated with training a new nurse is estimated at $88,000/nurse \(^{12}\)
Purpose

- Describe the perceptions of workplace incivility by RN’s working in emergency departments.

- Determine if there is a correlation between uncivil behavior experienced as a nursing student and uncivil behavior reported in the workplace.
Methods

- Inclusion criteria:
  - RNs 18 years of age or older
  - Working in emergency department
  - English speaking
Methods

- Descriptive study using Nursing Incivility Scale \(^{13}\)
- Anonymous online surveys via SurveyMonkey \(\text{©}\) sent through KHA and individual ED nurse managers
- N=129
Demographics: Gender, Age, Race

- Male: 16.5% (n=21)
- Female: 83.5% (n=106)
- Age:
  - 19-36 = 40.3% (n=52)
  - 37-47 = 31.8% (n=41)
  - 48-58 = 23.3% (n=30)
  - 59-67 = 4.7% (n=6)
- Caucasian: 97.7% (n=125)
- Other: 2.3% (n=4) (Asian, Hispanic, American Indian)
Demographics: Educational Level
Demographics: Years of experience as RN

![Bar chart showing years of experience as RN](chart.png)
Demographics:
Years of experience in Emergency Department

Years of experience as RN in Emergency Department

- <1
- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- >20
Results: Experienced uncivil behavior

I have experienced uncivil behavior in the workplace.
Results: Left a position

I have left a position because of uncivil behavior in the workplace.

- Yes: 21.1%
- No: 78.9%
Results: Reported uncivil behavior

Did you report the uncivil behavior?

- Yes: 50.5%
- No: 49.5%
Results: Report taken seriously
Results: Incivility policy in the institution

Does your institution have a policy against uncivil behavior?

- Yes: 55.2%
- No: 6.4%
- I don't know: 38.4%
Results:
Experienced stress related illness due to incivility
Results: Hospital personnel raise their voices when they get frustrated.

Bar chart: Employees don’t stick to an appropriate noise level (e.g., talking too loudly).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results: Hospital personnel blame others for their mistakes

HC - People blame others for their mistakes or offenses.
Results: Hospital personnel display offensive body language
Nurses on my unit bad mouth others in the workplace
Nurses on my unit gossip about one another.
Nurses on my unit gossip about their supervisor at work.
Physicians I work with take their feelings out on the nurses (e.g., stress, anger, “blowing off steam”).
Physicians I work with shout at nurses for making mistakes.
My direct supervisor....
Student Experience

- No relationship between perceived incivility as a student and perceived uncivil behavior in the workplace from others.

- No relationship between the perceived incivility as a student and nurses who report that they themselves have been uncivil.
Implications

- ED nurses should be educated on incivility and taught techniques to handle incivility if it occurs.
- ED nurse managers should foster open communication about uncivil behaviors.
- ED nurses should be aware of their own behaviors and demonstrate or model appropriate behavior.
Implications

- ED nurses should report uncivil behavior

- Hospital administrators and educators should ensure that clear policies that support “zero tolerance” for uncivil behaviors are in place and all employees are aware of the policy
Implications

- Nurse managers and upper administration should take reports seriously and follow-up with the policies.
- Hospital administrators should be aware that uncivil behaviors by employees affect patient safety and overall care.
Implications

- Nursing faculty should prepare new graduates with strategies to prevent and respond to uncivil behaviors.
- The American Association of Critical-Care Nurses’ has identified six standards for developing and sustaining healthy work environments. These standards include skilled communication, true collaboration, effective decision making, appropriate staffing, meaningful recognition and authentic leadership.\(^\text{14}\)
Conclusion

- Incivility in the workplace effects the health status of the employee and results in economic loss by the institution.\(^1\)

- Additional education and research in this area is warranted.
References


References


References


